

The Most High Rules the Kingdoms of Men

By Tim Fleeman

Students of the Bible are familiar with the book of Daniel. Most young children have heard about Daniel and the lion's den and his three friends who were cast into the fiery furnace. These stories serve to strengthen our faith showing that God delivers those who respect and obey him.

Daniel was one of the young men of Judah taken into Babylonian captivity by king Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 1:6-7). God was with Daniel and he was soon exalted in the kingdom of Babylon. During the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign he dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled and his sleep brake from him (Dan 2:1). The king called all his wise men together and ask them to interpret the dream which they were unable to do. This kindled the king's wrath and he commanded that all wise men in his kingdom be slain. Among those to be slain were Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Daniel begged the king for time and promised to interpret his dream. Daniel and his three friends prayed to God for their deliverance (Dan 2:16-18). God then showed Daniel the dream and the interpretation in a night vision. This caused Daniel to bless the God of heaven saying,

"Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: HE REMOVETH KINGS, AND SETTETH UP KINGS: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding" (Dan 2:19-21). As Daniel interpreted the dream he showed Nebuchadnezzar that he was the head of gold in the dream. Daniel then told the king that the GOD OF HEAVEN HATH GIVEN THEE A KINGDOM, POWER, STRENGTH, AND GLORY (Dan 2:37-38). In another dream Nebuchadnezzar saw a watcher, a holy one, come down from heaven saying he wanted the living to know that THE MOST HIGH RULETH IN THE KINGDOM OF MEN, AND GIVETH IT TO WHOMSOEVER HE WILL, AND SETTETH UP OVER IT THE BASEST OF MEN (Dan 4:17,25). In order to humble the king God took the kingdom away from him for a period of time. When the king's understanding returned he then blessed the God of heaven saying, "His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: AND HE DOETH ACCORDING TO HIS WILL IN THE ARMY OF HEAVEN, AND AMONG THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH: AND NONE CAN STAY HIS HAND, or say unto him, What doest thou"? (Dan 4:34-35).

From this study we understand that the God we serve sets up kings, rulers, and governments. He removes kings, rulers, governments. Our God rules in the kingdoms of men. Jehovah God does according to his will in heaven and in earth. No man has the power to stay his hand. Sometimes we feel everything is out of control in America and in the world. Our elected officials sometimes lie, cheat, steal, and commit other ungodly acts. As Christians we detest these things knowing that righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people (Prov 14:34). We feel helpless to do anything about this problem. Christians need to have a sense of hope and purpose knowing that our God controls the universe. Our God rules in the kingdoms of this earth now just as he did in Old Testament history. God at times will raise up the basest of men to rule a nation in order to accomplish his will.

God sent Moses down into Egypt to deliver his people out of bondage. God through Moses said to Pharaoh, "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth". (Exodus 9:13-18). Paul in writing to the Romans declared that God is the one who raised Pharaoh to power (Rom 9:15-18) enduring the vessel of wrath fitted for destruction (Rom 9:22-23). This same God who could raise up Egypt and her Pharaohs could bring them down when he so desired. God prophesied against Egypt through Ezekiel the prophet. God said he would cause the sword to fall out of Egypt's hand and he would strengthen the arm of Babylon and put a sword in their

hand (Ezek 30:21-26). God raised up Babylon to punish Egypt for her sins. God then used Babylon to take Judah and Benjamin into captivity to punish them for their idolatry. God told the children of Israel that they would be in captivity for 70 years and then he would cause them to return. When God was ready he raised up the Medes to conquer Babylon (Isa 13) and raised up Cyrus to be the ruler (Isa 44:28, Isa 45:1-6). God referred to the Medes as being his battle axe and his weapon of war (Jer 51:11,20). God then stirred Cyrus's spirit to allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild (Ezra 1:1). Indeed our God rules in the kingdoms of men. Our God, whom we serve, rules over all the kingdoms of the heathen (2 Chron 20:6).

God was still ruling in the kingdoms of men in the days of Christ. When Pilate told Jesus he had the power to release or crucify him Jesus said, " You could have no power against me, except it be given thee from above" (John 19:10-11). God raised Rome to power and gave Pilate his place of authority. The fact that God could foretell through his prophets the minute details of Jesus' scourging and crucifixion show that God was in control. God used Titus and the Roman armies to fulfil Jesus' prediction that Jerusalem would fall (Matt 24:2,15,21 ; Luke 19:44). Paul warned Christians to be subject to civil government. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God

(Rom 13:1-7). We are to pray for civil rulers (I Tim 2:1-2) and submit to those who are sent by God to rule (I Pet 2:13-14). In AD 96 John penned the last letter of the New Testament and prophesied of things which would shortly come to pass saying, "For God hath put in their hearts TO FULFIL HIS WILL, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, UNTIL THE WORDS OF GOD SHALL BE FULFILLED. Even yet our God rules in the kingdoms of men.

Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isa 46:10).—RTF

A Moments Wisdom

--We generate fears while we sit. We overcome them by action. Fear is nature's way of warning us to get busy. (Dr. Henry Link)

--Do everything with a good heart and expect nothing in return and you will never be disappointed. (Barbara Lowe)

--I always wondered why somebody didn't do something about "that". Then I realized I am somebody! (unknown)

--Nothing changes if nothing changes. (unknown)